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Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-01
INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
NSF-01 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 /118 W
----------250908Z 105426 /20
P R 250837Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7213
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: JA, KS, PFOR
SUBJECT: FURTHER PROBLEMS FOR KOREAN CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT

REF: TOKYO 5585 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: CHINESE DIPLOMATIC PROTEST, NORTH SEA OIL RIG BLOW-OUT, AND RUNNING CLOCK PRESENT PROBLEMS FOR KOREAN SHELF AGREEMENT IN DIET. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO TOKYO PRESS GOJ REFRAINED FROM PUSHING THROUGH VOTE ON KOREAN CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT IN LOWER HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE APRIL 23 FOR FEAR OF JEOPARDIZING 12-MILE TERRITORIAL WATERS AND 200-MILE EXCLUSIVE-FISHING-ZONE BILLS. ACCORDING TO FONOFF, GOVERNMENT NOW HOPES TO VOTE SHELF AGREEMENT OUT OF COMMITTEE APRIL 27 AND SEEK FULL LOWER HOUSE REATIFICATION
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ON FOLLOWING DAY -- JUST IN TIME TO MAKE APRIL 28 LEGISLATIVE DEADLINE FOR AVOIDING UPPER HOUSE BATTLE (REFTEL). LOWER HOUSE CONSIDERATION OF AGREEMENT, HOWEVER, MAY BE COMPLICATED AND FURTHER DELAYED BY TWO NEW FACTORS.

2. LOCAL CHINESE EMBASSY DELIVERED VERBAL PROTEST TO FONOFF APRIL 23, ARGUING SHELF AGREEMENT VIOLATED CHINESE "SOVEREIGNTY"

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AND WARNING GOJ AND ROK WOULD BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY CONSE-
QUENCES. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, FONOFF CHINA DEPDIR IKEDA
CHARACTERIZED PROTEST AS SIMILAR IN CONTENT TO EARLIER CHINESE
PROTESTS WHEN AGREEMENT WAS ORIGINALLY SIGNED IN 1974. IKEDA
SUSPECTED APRIL 23 PROTEST WAS LARGELY "FOR THE RECORD." WHEN
FONOFF RESPONDED WITH REITERATION OF LONGSTANDING INVITATION TO
DISCUSS SHELF MATTERS IN DETAIL, CHINESE BACKED OFF AS BEFORE.
HOWEVER, FACT THAT PROTEST HAD BEEN CARRIED IN TOKYO PRESS WOULD
PROVIDE DIET OPPOSITION WITH FURTHER AMMUNITION AGAINST AGREE-
MENT, IKEDA NOTED.

3. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, FONOFF NE ASIA DEPDIR
KAWASHIMA STATED THAT RECENT NORTH SEA BLOW-OUT CREATED ADDI-
TIONAL PROBLEM FOR GOJ. PREVIOUS DIET TESTIMONY HAD STRESSED
SAFETY OF OFFSHORE OIL OPERATIONS, NOTING THAT ADVANCES IN
EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY DIMINISHED CHANCES OF SANTA BARBARA OIL
DISASTER IN JAPANESE WATERS. WEEKEND'S OIL-RIG BLOW-OUT IN NORTH
SEA WITH RESULTING POLLUTION NEATLY UNDERCUT GOVERNMENT'S
PREVIOUS ARGUMENTS. KAWASHIMA DECLINED TO PREDICT THIS WEEK'S
OUTCOME FOR SHELF AGREEMENT.
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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